

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 and 13-36 are all the claims pending in the application, prior to the present amendment.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 13 and 18-27 are allowed.

Claims 13 and 18 are claims that were in dependent form. Accordingly, applicants have amended claims 13 and 18 to place them in independent form. Applicants have cancelled claims 1-11 and 28-36.

The claims 13 and 18 that the Examiner indicated as being allowed are process claims that included all of the recitations of product claim 1. The present specification, at page 9, does not limit the process of claim 13 to the product of claim 1. Similarly, the present specification, at page 10, does not limit the process of claim 18 to the product of claim 1. Accordingly, instead of incorporating the recitations of claim 1 into the allowed claims, applicants have amended the process claims without any of the recitations of product claim 1 and have amended these claims to more positively recite process steps. Applicants have canceled claims 1-11 and 28-36. In addition, applicants have amended claims 14 to 17 so that they depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 13.

Claims 1-11, 14-17, 28-31, 33, 35 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,698,177 to Pratsinis et al.

In addition, claims 31-34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by applicants alleged admission set forth in the "Background" portion of the specification.

As discussed above, claims 1-11 and 28-36 have been canceled, and claims 14-17 have been amended to depend ultimately from claim 13 which has been indicated to be allowable. Accordingly, applicants submit that all of the claims that remain in the application are allowable.

In view of the above, applicants request withdrawal of these rejections.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

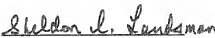
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Date: April 25, 2007